

Leland Sabby

February 29, 1920 - December 7, 2008

Leland “Lee” Sabby was born in Rolette, ND, on February 29, 1920, and died on December 7, 2008 in Valley City, ND. Lee was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran church. His first four years of education was in Chicago schools. Grades 5-11 in a rural school, Wolf Creek Consolidated, near Rolette, ND, graduating from Rolette High School in 1938. He attended Luther College, Decorah, IA, and received a B.A. in mathematics in 1943. He enlisted in the USNR and attended Notre Dame University where he was commissioned ensign and then attended Harvard University for further training. Lee then served in the US Navy with the Seventh Fleet during WWII. After discharge from the Navy, he went into teaching. One year at Edinburg High School, ND, two years at Harvey High School, ND, and 35 years at Valley City High School.

In 1950, Lee was united in marriage with Ina Peterson in Jewell, IA. They have been blessed with four children. Lee is survived by his wife and his children: Paul, Minneapolis, MN, Mary (Greg) Allen, Jamestown, ND, Rachel (Jim) Jensen, Valley City, ND, and John, Edmond, OK, and by ten grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Lee earned his Masters of Arts degree from the University of N. Colorado, in 1953, and attended summer schools at UND, the University of Illinois (two summers), Stanford University (Shell Fellow) and the University of Denver.

During his teaching years, he was active in a number of activities:

Member of Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Valley City

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

ND Council of Teachers of Mathematics—first President

Sheyenne Care Center Board, past President

Recording Secretary of ND State Legislative Commission of AARP

Kiwanis Club

Valley City Area Retired Teachers Association

Lee also served as Director of Teacher Workshops for NASA at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX for two summers.

In 1984, Lee received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching of Mathematics. Lee was appointed by four governors, both Republican and Democrat to serve on: Teachers' Professional Practices Commission and Board of Trustees of ND Teachers' Fund for Retirement State Investment Board. Lee was elected to serve in two sessions of the ND House of Representatives.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **9**. 7:00 PM - 12:00 AM (CT)

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
138 3rd St. NW
Valley City, ND

Service

DEC **10**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
138 3rd St. NW
Valley City, ND

Tribute Wall

“ On his 100th birthday, I am thinking of Mr. Leland Sabby. Mr. Sabby (I could never call him Lee or Leland) was my high school math teacher for all 4 years. But he was much more than that. In our senior year we only had a few weeks of trigonometry and he told us to tell our university math placement counselors that. When I took the trig placement test, I had a perfect score. His teaching was that good. I remember the day after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot, Mr. Sabby spoke emotionally and eloquently about what a great and courageous man Dr. King was. That had a profound effect on me. Before I headed off to college to major in math, Mr. Sabby gave me some introductory calculus material to work on. The summer after I graduated from UND, I met with Mr. Sabby when he was teaching a summer session to help elementary aged students strengthen their math skills. I learned techniques, games, and programs that came in very useful for my job interviews and my first years of teaching as some of the classes I taught were for high school students who were several years behind. Every time I came back to Valley City I visited with Mr. and Mrs. Sabby. We'd have cookies and lemonade on the back porch looking over their amazing back yard and discuss our lives and mathematics. One year I came to town with my family. I was so excited to have my wife and daughters meet the man who taught me so much and inspired me to be the best math teacher I could be. He brought out a mancala board that he had made, played a game of mancala with my daughter, Mandy, and then gave the board to us. Mr. Sabby and I shared Christmas cards for many years. I do not have the words to describe what he meant to me. His intellect, his desire to always improve, his caring ways, his awareness of the world beyond ND, his teaching methods, his love for his family, his being provided me with such inspiration. I loved that man. I didn't learn of his passing until several months later. I was devastated. I wish I had known when he died as I would have been there for his service. But today, I celebrate his 100th birthday (or is it his 25th?). Here's to a magnificent man and his life, well lived!





Rod McKinney - February 29, 2020 at 01:23 PM

MA

Thank you! That was beautiful! He was as remarkable a father as he was a teacher.

Mary Allen - March 07, 2021 at 07:07 PM

PS

Rod. Thank you for your kind words. My dad was a remarkable man. He was much loved and is much missed. Paul Sabby

paul sabby - March 07, 2021 at 11:17 PM



“ Dear Paul, Our thoughts are with you at this time. Your father was obviously a wonderful and much loved man. All our love and kind wishes, Annie & Steve, England##imported-begin##Annie & Steve Hull##imported-end##

December 17, 2008 at 06:43 AM



“ I had the privilege of having Mr. Sabby for all of my math classes at VCHS. I can only say what a privilege. He was definitely a quiet man of integrity who nurtured our learning and made us better for the experience. He shall be missed.##imported-begin##Georgia Stephenson Flannigan##imported-end##

December 16, 2008 at 06:05 PM



“ *Ina and family,
Please accept my deepest sympathies on the passing of a dear man. He will be greatly missed by one and all. Know that he is at peace and at home with the Lord.##imported-begin##Sharon Nilles##imported-end##*

December 14, 2008 at 01:15 PM



“ *Mr. Sabby was my favorite teacher in high school. My love of mathematics was encouraged and developed by his teaching methods and guidance. Our family attended church with the Sabby's and we grew up in the same Lutheran faith. With my father's recent passing, I have lost 2 of the most influential men in my life.##imported-begin##Lorna(Cary) Ozawa 1970 VCHS graduate##imported-end##*

December 13, 2008 at 12:42 PM



“ *To the family of Leland Sabby:*

I was privileged to teach with Lee for the 19 years I taught science and chemistry at VCHS. Lee was the consummate professional, extremely competent and his quiet manner was the way he dealt with all people. He served education, the education association, his church, Sunday School as a teacher, and the community through his Legislative service. He was a real gentleman, scholar and I am proud to have known him as a friend. I wish you the best as you deal with your loss. Best wishes.

Joseph A. Westby##imported-begin##Joseph A. Westby##imported-end##

December 11, 2008 at 03:34 PM



“ Count me as another algebra student who was inspired by Lee Sabby. Maybe too much! He was the same in the classroom as when he came out to the farm in the summer to measure grain bins. I have taught math to college kids for over 20 years now, and his calm way of doing business is never far from my thoughts. I believe we only learn by example, and I consider myself lucky to have known him.##imported-begin##Tim Sauer##imported-end##

December 11, 2008 at 02:01 PM



“ To the Sabby family: We are all fortunate to have known such a wonderful person. His ambitions were many, his ability to work with all ages was evident, and his kind heart was a "given". He was a fascinating man who earned the respect of so many. What a difference he made in this world. God bless.##imported-begin##Joan (Pearson) Klein##imported-end##

December 10, 2008 at 07:53 PM



“ Dear family of Mr. Sabby:
You have my sympathies on the death of your husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. It was truly an eye opener reading all about Mr. Sabby. What a great person he was both to his family, community, state, along with all the students that were greatly privileged to have him as their instructor in math. I really did enjoy his classes and always his demeanor. It was great to read about his military career. I thank him for serving in the military during WWII and defending out freedoms. His memory will always be a good one in my mind.
Doug Peterson, class of '61##imported-begin##Doug Peterson##imported-end##

December 10, 2008 at 03:18 PM



“ My thoughts are with you today as you give thanks for a life well-lived and blessings you have received. May the message of Christmas bring you peace and comfort.##imported-begin##Marilyn Preus##imported-end##

December 10, 2008 at 12:42 PM



“ Lee was one of the most gracious, kind, and caring people we have known. These traits have been passed on to his children. He knew his Lord Jesus intimately and lived accordingly. He has been a blessing to his family, his students his friends and his neighbors.

He may not be one of the most wealthy people by human standards but he is now rich in heaven.

Lee will be sorely missed but his lessons will live on.##imported-begin##Bonar, Christa, Colin & Andra Sabby##imported-end##

December 10, 2008 at 09:57 AM



“ I am so sorry for your loss, and so grateful that I had a chance to get to know Leland Sabby. Long before I started my teaching career at VCHS in 1970, I had heard of Mr. Sabby, and must admit that I was intimidated by his professional reputation and his quiet demeanor. I thought that we couldn't possibly have anything in common: me, boisterous unorthodox hippy English teacher rookie, and him, ultimate professional higher level math teacher and resident "Brain." Over the years as hallmates, I grew to truly appreciate his sense of humor, kindness. and collegiality. I remember fondly how he and Ina performed together [after some gentle prodding] in our VCEA teacher talent show and "brought down the house." Lee was an amazing person whose mere presence elevated any group he was in. Thank you for sharing him with us!##imported-begin##Patricia Horgan##imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 09:49 PM



“ I'm sorry I cannot be with you for the memorial services, but wanted to let you know that "Mr. Sabby," was a treasured teacher from whom I took every math course that was offered through high school. He also a special Sunday School teacher at Our Saviors, who expanded my understanding of faith, just as he had done with mathematics. We are thankful to be able to call him a teacher and a friend. May God bless his memory and the goodness that he displayed and the intellectual and spiritual curiosity he inspired.##imported-begin##Karl Limvere##imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 09:42 PM



“ I was sadden to hear of Lee's death. I was so glad that I had a chance to see him this summer. He was a great influence on me when I was young and a good and valued friend of my mother and dad. I hope Ina will be comforted by all the good memories she and Lee shared and all that she and Lee meant those who knew them best.

Ric Barton###imported-begin##Ric Barton###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 09:05 PM



“ To Mr. Sabby's family: I am so very sorry for your loss. Of all of my instructors over the years, including those in high school, college, and medical school, Mr. Sabby was the kindest, most caring teacher I ever had and I have always held a deep respect for him as a person and educator. I consider it an honor to have been one of the many students he taught over the years at VCHS. There will NEVER be another Mr. Sabby. For many of us, our transition to our college studies was made much easier thanks to him as he taught "College Prep" and prepared us for our futures. I will always be grateful to him. My thoughts and prayers are with you as you miss him. I'm sure that God has a special position for Mr. Sabby....probably teaching the angels high level math in heaven!###imported-begin##Mark Nielsen- 1975 VCHS graduate###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 08:02 PM



“ how sad all of us Uloth's are at Lee's passing. I considered him my second father and your house my second home. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. His kindness and thoughtfulness were inspirational.###imported-begin##Paul Uloth###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 07:37 PM



“ Dear family of Leland Sabby,
how our heart weeps
for your HUGE loss. Your husband, father, grandfather, and father in
law has
left you with indullable memories of a
man filled with kindness, quietness, and
love. I can still see his face gleam when
he showed me his back yard and gave me the honor of making a
garden suggestion. He was a great teacher, only if I could be half of
that greatness
I would of known that children have been touched and reached.
Bless the memory that continues to live in all our hearts.
Love, Danny & Kathy Joyce##imported-begin##Dan
Joyce##imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 07:08 PM



“ I always felt that "Mr. Sabby" was one of my favorite teachers. He
had such a way of explaining math that even I could begin to
understand what to do. He also had the sixth sense--he knew when
I didn't know what to do. Then he would call on me and help me
understand. I feel truly blessed to have had him as a
teacher.##imported-begin##Cheryl (Foss) Rowekamp##imported-
end##

December 09, 2008 at 06:37 PM



“ Dear Paul and family,
You are all in our thoughts at this very difficult time. We have all lost a true gentleman and a lovely person. We're so deeply sorry for your loss.
Keith and Kathleen Kale###imported-begin###Keith and Kathleen Kale###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 04:35 PM



“ Dear Sabby family (Tara Jensen/Altringer),

I would like to offer you my deepest sympathy in the passing of Leland. May God hold and carry you in this time of mourning.###imported-begin###Dane Grebel###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 01:10 PM



“ To Paul and his family: what a wonderful father you had! I'm sure he will be missed - my thoughts are with you.###imported-begin###Heidi Schreiber###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 01:07 PM



“ Lee was such a dear man. Ina, we will pray for you and your extended family. Please let the memories of Lee and his accomplishments comfort you at this time. He truly has left a legacy.###imported-begin###Kent, Jeanne, Reagan, & Synneva Sortland###imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 12:26 PM



“ I was a student of Ina's and remember our end of the year class party at their house. I also went to school with Mary & Greg's children in Jamestown. Lee was a very kind and gentle man. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you at this time.##imported-begin##Mindy (Gordon) Kotaska##imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 12:20 PM

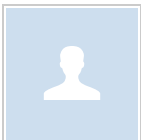


“ To Lee Sabby's family,

Your loved one touched the lives of all of us who were privileged to know and work with him as teachers at VCHS. I'll always remember and appreciate his friendly, gentle counsel when I needed it. He was highly respected by the students in his classes, who will always be grateful for the way his teaching prepared them for college math.

Lee made a lasting contribution to the Valley City community and beyond. I sympathize with all of you as you adjust to life without him.##imported-begin##Wayne Nielsen##imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 12:09 PM



“ My deepest condolences to you , Ina, and the family. Both you and Lee were dear friends of my parents, Gertrude and Chester Campbell. I so enjoyed visiting with you both when I was in VC for the All 50's Reunion five years ago. May the Lord wrap His arms around you now and comfort you. Love, Kathleen##imported-begin##Kathleen Campbell Welsh##imported-end##

December 09, 2008 at 04:59 AM



“ *Friends of Paul's, we send him and his mother, brother and sisters all our sympathy.*

Love from Joel & Christine and family,

Tours (France)##imported-begin##Joel Preus##imported-end##

December 08, 2008 at 07:09 PM